

Introduction

A comprehensive system of parks and recreation opportunities is important to Kerrville's quality of life. The Parks and Recreation Element serves as a synopsis of a more in-depth Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This element is consistent with other plan elements including land use, transportation, central city, corridor design, and public facilities as well as with the anticipated population growth and increasing public service demands. For more detailed information on existing facilities, future needs and priorities refer to the Kerrville Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Impact on Tourism

Parks and recreation facilities have often been looked at in terms of the benefits they provide to the community, particularly to those that use the facilities. However, there are many region wide and public benefits derived from parks and recreation facilities in addition to the benefits to those that use the facilities. These public benefits – economic, social and environmental – are often ignored in determining the success of parks and recreation facilities and in making decisions related to sustaining or investing in them. Parks and recreation facilities play an important role in contributing to economic development initiatives in the City. One of the key economic development benefits of parks and recreation facilities is attracting tourists. Nationwide, tourism continues to be one of the faster growing sectors of the economy. Tourism contributes to economic development in the region through facilitating the accumulation of wealth and contributing to job creation. In Kerrville, the parks and recreation system is a significant attraction for visitors, which contributes to local tourism and economic development.

Parks and Recreation Planning Principles:

- *Equal access to recreational areas and facilities;*
- *Coordinated with other organizations and programs;*
- *Incorporate public education, health and fitness, and leisure;*
- *Consider availability of resources in planning, development, and operation;*
- *Opportunities for incremental evaluation and review;*
- *Integration of other plans into final recommendations;*
- *Established procedures for acquiring parkland prior to ensuing development;*
- *Encourage the most efficient utilization of land; and,*
- *Consider the needs, desires, and opinions of the intended users.*

Issues

Area residents, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee identified the following issues:

1. **Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.**
Natural resources including the Guadalupe River provide a variety of recreation opportunities and contribute significantly to the quality of life in Kerrville. These resources should be protected through parks and recreation land acquisition, conservation, preservation and environmentally sensitive planning.



- 2. Maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities.** As the population grows and increased demand is placed on existing parks and recreation facilities, maintenance of these facilities will be essential to sustain an adequate quality of facilities. Residents identified various improvements at existing facilities, which include routine maintenance and repairs as well as the addition of new equipment and facilities to meet the active and passive recreation needs of the community's residents and visitors. Some of the desired additions include indoor recreational facilities such as gymnasium space, pavilions, and covered gathering facilities. Key improvements identified by residents include the provision of restrooms at each of the park facilities. Parks that were identified as needing restrooms include Guadalupe, Singing Wind and Elm Creek Parks.
- 3. Safe and efficient network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.** An interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities serves not only as an alternative mode of transportation, but also as a form of recreation and exercise. Residents of the community have expressed the desire for a system of nature trails and bike lanes/routes that connect the community's parks, schools, neighborhoods, commercial centers and public buildings.
- 4. Funds for additional parks and recreation facilities.** As the community continues to grow, additional parks and recreation facilities will be necessary concurrent with new development. Funding for these facilities can be accomplished through local financing, state and federal grants, and by private fees and dedication.

Goals, Objectives and Action Statements

Goals, objectives, policies and action statements for the Parks and Recreation element reflect the identified issues. The following represent a summary of the goals for the Parks and Recreation element:

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| Goal 8.1: | Conserve natural resources and open spaces through park and recreation land acquisition, open space preservation and environmentally sensitive planning. |
| Goal 8.2: | Maintain, enhance and expand the existing parks and recreation system, and accommodate the need for indoor facilities. |
| Goal 8.3: | Develop a pedestrian and bicycle network of sidewalks, trails and bikeways which connects neighborhoods to parks, schools, shopping centers, public buildings, open spaces and other destinations. |



Goal 8.4: Provide and fund a diverse blend of parks and recreation opportunities to adequately accommodate the current and future needs of Kerrville's residents.

GOAL 8.1 Conserve natural resources and open spaces through park and recreation land acquisition, open space preservation and environmentally sensitive planning.

Objective A: Identify and acquire existing natural resources that warrant protection, conservation and/or enhancement; provide habitats for endangered species or natural open spaces suitable for parks, recreation and both environmental and historical preservation of sites.

Objective B: Encourage the preservation of open space by individuals, corporations, non-profits and public agencies to enhance the livability, aesthetic value and natural beauty of the City.

Objective C: Preserve floodway and floodplain areas for conservation use, public open space and linear linkages between parks, neighborhoods and community activity areas.

Objective D: Provide parks and recreation opportunities oriented around the Guadalupe River.

Objective E: Utilize and promote the City's natural amenities and parks and recreation facilities as tourist attractions.

Policy: *Develop and utilize areas that are consistent with the Master Parks and Recreation Plan.*

Action 8.1.1: *Encourage preservation of the Guadalupe River through land conservation, open space preservation and land acquisition.*

- a. Acquire land along the north and south sides of the Guadalupe River for use as open space, greenbelts and trail development.
- b. Develop standards for riverfront development.

Action 8.1.2: *Use natural waterways to provide water-oriented recreation opportunities in the community.*



The Guadalupe River is as an important asset to the community and provides for a variety of water related recreational opportunities.



- a. Increase public access to the Guadalupe River through recreation easements and boat ramps.
- b. Develop a coordinated system of access points along the Guadalupe River corridor.
- c. Develop nature trails along the tributaries to the Guadalupe River, including Dietert Creek, Elm Creek, Town Creek, Quinlin Creek and Third Creek.

Action 8.1.3: Encourage the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.



Public access to the Guadalupe River should be increased through recreation easements and boat ramps.

- a. Identify environmentally sensitive areas and conservation sites along the Guadalupe River and preserve them as public open space or recreation areas.
- b. Protect priority conservation areas through conservation easements, density bonuses or through fee simple acquisition.
- c. Utilize development incentives and performance standards to encourage dedication of parks and conservation easements and preservation of public open space within new development.

Action 8.1.4: Develop tourism related activities and opportunities oriented around the natural resources in the community including the Guadalupe River.

- a. Acquire land along the Guadalupe River for parks and recreation amenities that would serve the needs of residents and tourists.
- b. Develop recreational amenities at Guadalupe Lake.
- c. Link and coordinate the proposed trail along the Guadalupe River with the proposed boardwalk identified in Link 7 - Central City. This would provide access to the river and businesses in the downtown area.
- d. Provide nature trails and opportunities for birding along the River.
- e. Provide opportunities for fishing and boating through developing a system of access points and boat rentals along the River.



Goal 8.2: Maintain, enhance and expand the existing parks and recreation system, and accommodate the need for indoor facilities.

Objective A: Develop and implement a parks and recreation improvement program, which prioritizes improvements for each of the current and future city facilities.

Objective B: Improve the maintenance of all parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Objective C: Provide for a variety of recreational opportunities including cultural and community activities and special events that meet the passive and active recreational needs of the community.

Objective D: Provide indoor opportunities (such as multi-use pavilions, gym space and gathering areas).

Objective E: Identify ways to finance park facilities and improvements, including local financing mechanisms, state and federal grants and loans and private dedication and fees.

Objective F: Establish cooperative agreements and coordinated efforts with other governmental jurisdictions, educational bodies and private sector entities.

Policy: *Provide ongoing review of recreation facilities to consider improving existing equipment.*

Action 8.2.1: *Develop a maintenance program for parks and recreation facilities.*

- a. Prioritize improvements of existing parks and recreation facilities identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan based upon criteria such as safety hazards, level of use, and other practical operating and maintenance criteria.
- b. Initiate the short-, mid- and long-term improvements to existing parks and recreation facilities and proposed new areas as outlined in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- c. Include public restrooms as a standard improvement in community parks.
- d. As maintenance and re-establishment of parks occurs, replace the existing signs with new



entrance signage constructed of natural materials and including appropriate lighting and landscaping.

- e. Conduct a formalized annual condition assessment of existing parks and recreation areas and facilities to identify improvements and determine the level of annual financial commitment required to adequately maintain existing facilities.

Action 8.2.2: Ensure adequate staff and funding is available for park maintenance in the community.

- a. Increase parks maintenance staff concurrent with population increases to ensure adequate maintenance and quality facilities.
- b. Provide adequate funding in the annual budget to support an appropriate amount of park maintenance and staff.
- c. Establish a “Friends-of-the-Park” program to solicit neighborhood involvement in maintaining and policing the public parks.

Action 8.2.3: Provide for a variety of recreation opportunities at each parks and recreation facility.

- a. Provide an appropriate amount of active and passive recreation facilities to meet observed needs.
- b. Expand and enhance existing recreation programs and facilities to meet the needs of the mature and younger populations.
- c. Continue to provide and expand City-sponsored activities that provide opportunities for recreation and educational activities.
- d. Expand recreation facilities and programs for the 11 to 16 age group. Additional facilities and programs needed include a skateboard park, basketball leagues, BMX park, volleyball courts and basketball courts.
- e. Appropriately site recreation facilities in locations convenient and accessible to neighborhoods, but buffered from single family residential development.



Policy: *Create opportunities to increase, maintain and enhance indoor facilities.*

Action 8.2.4: *Ensure an adequate distribution of indoor facilities that meet the diverse needs of the community.*

- a. Use the Parks and Recreation System Plan to identify possible locations of indoor areas.
- b. Acquire and develop indoor space within the extraterritorial park zones to be concurrent with new development or in advance of ensuing development.
- c. Acquire and develop the requisite acreage of neighborhood and community parks with indoor facilities to maintain or exceed national standards in the Years 2010 and 2020.

GOAL 8.3: Develop a pedestrian and bicycle network of sidewalks, trails and bikeways which connects neighborhoods to parks, schools, shopping centers, public buildings, open spaces and other destinations.

Objective A: Identify potential greenbelt corridors, bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes and linear parks that can provide a safe and secure connection between parks, schools, neighborhoods and open spaces.

Objective B: Identify and utilize rights-of-way, easements, natural drainage courses, the Guadalupe River and its tributaries for nature trails to link the City's parks and recreation areas.

Objective C: Implement policies and procedures to acquire recreational easements and/or rights-of-way at an early stage in the development process.

Objective D: Develop a river trail system along the Guadalupe River to link Kerrville Schreiner State Park, Kerr County Park, Flat Rock Lake, Louise Hays Park, Tranquility Island, Central City, the Butt-Holdsworth Library, the Riverside Nature Center, Upper Guadalupe River Lake and Guadalupe Park.



An interconnected system of trails and bike lanes contribute to the recreational needs of the community.



Policy: *Provide ongoing open space and park dedication review for voluntary and City initiated annexation requests.*

Action 8.3.1: *Utilize the River corridor for parks and recreation amenities and links between major attractions.*

- a. Develop the individual trail segments and associated improvements along the Guadalupe River, as specified within the implementation plan of the Kerrville Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- b. Request a reimbursement grant through the Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) program, administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, with local bond funds as the dollar-for-dollar match.
- c. Establish incentives for developments adjacent to the Guadalupe River to dedicate a recreation easement for public use.
- d. Develop the public access sites along the Guadalupe River and improve current pedestrian crossings to ADA standards to encourage public use.
- e. Further investigate the standing easement along the Upper Guadalupe Lake, which may be used for public access and recreational use.

Action 8.3.2: *Utilize utility and drainage easements, the Guadalupe River and its tributaries, including Lime Creek, Dietert Creek, Elm Creek, Town Creek, Quinlin Creek, and Third Creek, to link neighborhoods to the City's parks, schools, and other public attractions.*



Natural areas along creeks offer scenic beauty and provide for recreational opportunities including trails and connectors between major parks.

- a. Acquire land or secure easements along the Guadalupe River and its tributaries as well as other natural corridors that may be used as connectors between parks.
- b. Coordinate with owners of utility easements and rights-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle use.
- c. Link Sample Park to Singing Wind Park via a nature trail along the existing gas pipeline easement.



- d. Link Schultz Park through Elm Creek Park to Lois Street and Cypress Parks and the river corridor along the Elm Creek drainage easement.

Action 8.3.3: Develop an interconnected pedestrian and bicycle network throughout the community.

- a. Designate appropriate arterial, collector and residential streets that are suitable for bicycle traffic, as shown in the Parks and Recreation System Plan.
- b. Initiate improvement of the on-street bike routes and/or lanes as displayed on the Parks and Recreation System Plan, including striping, surface improvements, curb cuts, actuated signals, signage, etc.
- c. Initiate improvement of the off-street trail system as displayed on the Parks and Recreation System Plan, including right-of-way/easement acquisition, land dedication, design and construction.

Goal 8.4: Provide and fund a diverse blend of parks and recreation opportunities to adequately accommodate the current and future needs of Kerrville's residents.

Objective A: Develop an even distribution of parks and recreation facilities that will provide equitable opportunity and access for all citizens.

Objective B: Provide parks and recreation opportunities for all persons including low-income, elderly and youth-at-risk citizens, recognizing the importance of accessible public facilities.

Objective C: Identify ways to finance park facilities and improvements, including local financing mechanisms, state and federal grants and loans and private dedication and fees.

Objective D: Establish cooperative agreements and coordinated efforts with other governmental jurisdictions, educational bodies and private sector entities.

Policy: *Protect natural areas and provide for new parks and recreation areas and open space as the City grows and develops.*



Action 8.4.1: Ensure an adequate distribution of parks and recreation facilities that meet the diverse needs of the community.



Elm Creek Park

- a. Acquire and develop neighborhood and community parks in the identified deficient areas, as shown on the Parks and Recreation System Plan.
- b. Acquire and develop parks and open space within the extraterritorial park zones to be concurrent with new development or in advance of ensuing development.
- c. Acquire and develop the requisite acreage of neighborhood and community parks to maintain or exceed national standards in the Years 2010 and 2020.
- d. Continue to evaluate the feasibility of transferring ownership and operation of the Kerrville Schreiner State Park to the municipal park system, which would serve as a regional park facility.

Action 8.4.2: Use innovative ways to finance park facilities and improvements.

- a. Revise the current park dedication requirements concurrent with approval of a final plat, which will offer the ability to acquire, through dedication, land for public parks and open space in the rapidly developing extraterritorial jurisdiction.
- b. Amend the current park dedication ordinance allowing a reduction rather than exemption in the required acreage in exchange for private open space or golf courses.
- c. Pursue grants from regional and statewide foundations for the provision or enhancement of local parks and recreation facilities.
- d. Develop corporate, memorial and individual sponsorships with naming privileges for facilities, parks, trails and greenbelts.

Action 8.4.3: Continue to establish cooperative agreements with other governmental jurisdictions, educational bodies and private organizations.



- a. Establish cooperative agreements with developers and landowners in the ETJ to develop parkland in newly developing residential areas. This may include the dedication of parkland that would be maintained by the City.
- b. Develop cooperative partnerships with the Kerrville Little League and Hill County Youth Soccer Association to further meet the needs of the young citizens.
- c. Continue and expand the mutually beneficial relationship with the Kerrville Independent School District to include not only joint acquisition of land, but joint use of both school and municipal facilities.
- d. Establish interlocal park agreements with Kerr County for joint acquisition and maintenance in the ETJ.

Action 8.4.4: Ensure parks and recreation interests in the community are adequately represented to the City.

- a. Include the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board or its designee in the subdivision platting process as needed.
- b. Utilize the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to assist in the planning and design of park facilities, as needed, to meet the desires and needs of the adjacent neighborhoods.

Existing Resources vs. Projected Needs

Utilizing the standards established by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) as a measurable benchmark, the acreage of parks and recreation areas needed in Kerrville is displayed in **Table 8.1, NRPA Standards**.

Based upon a population estimate of 20,425 persons, according to national standards, the City should have a range between 127 acres and 213 acres of parks and recreation areas, as shown in Table 8.1. As shown in **Table 8.2, Kerrville City Parkland, City and Private Organization Operated Athletic Facilities, 2002**, the City owns a total of 218 acres (excluding special use facilities), of which 114 acres is developed as parkland. Information for city-owned, privately-operated facilities for soccer and baseball also appears in the Table.



TABLE 8.1

NRPA Standards

Kerrville Comprehensive Plan
Kerrville, Texas

Classification	NRPA Standard	Low	High	Recommended
Pocket Park	0.25 to 0.5 acre/1,000 persons	5	10	8
Neighborhood	1 to 2 acres/1,000 persons	20	40	31
Community	5 to 8 acres/1,000 persons	102	163	133
Total		127	213	172

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

While Table 8.2 identifies 218 acres of current City parkland, Table 3.1 in the Land Use Link shows 890 acres of “Park and Recreation” land in Kerrville. The 672-acre difference results from the broader definition used for land use planning purposes, encompassing both public and private properties and facilities. The City’s special use facilities (Scott Schreiner Municipal Golf Course, HEB Municipal Tennis Center, and the City Pool) account for 161 acres of the difference. Athletic fields used by private soccer and Little League teams represent another 50 acres. The remaining approximately 460 acres is in the private Riverhill and Comanche Trace golf courses plus the County Park at Flat Rock Lake.

The developed acreage of parkland in the City (114 acres) was used in determining existing and future needs based on national standards. The City is currently deficient in the provision of pocket and community parks. Displayed in **Table 8.3, Existing and Recommended Supply of Multi-Use Parkland**, is a calculation of the existing supply of parks, the recommended supply, and the number of acres that the City is sufficient or deficient. Four percent of the pocket park and 53 percent of the community park demand is currently met. Neighborhood (140 percent) parks exceed the demand, yet are poorly distributed around the community for best use by the population.



TABLE 8.2
Kerrville City Parkland, City and Private Organization Operated
Athletic Facilities, 2002
 Kerrville Comprehensive Plan
 Kerrville, Texas

Name	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Undeveloped Acres
City Multi-Use Parks:			
Louise Hays	64.0	43.0	21.0
Singing Wind	100.0	20.0	80.0
Carver	5.0	5.0	0.0
Schultz	1.2	1.2	0.0
Westland	1.0	1.0	0.0
Lytle	4.	4.0	4.0
Travis	5.0	5.0	0.0
Sample	5.0	5.0	0.0
Lois Street	3.9	3.9	0.0
Tranquility Island	7.0	7.0	0.0
Guadalupe	5.0	5.0	0.0
Knapp Ramp	1.0	1.0	0.0
Cypress Park	1.0	1.0	1.0
Elm Creek	11.9	11.9	0.0
Habitat	3.0	0.0	3.0
TOTAL CITY MULTI-USE PARKS	218.0	114.0	104.0
City-Operated Facilities:			
Tennis Center	4.8	4.8	0.0
Golf Course	155.7	155.7	0.0
Pool	0.5	0.5	0.0
TOTAL CITY-OPERATED FACILITIES	161.0	161.0	0.0
Privately-Operated Facilities:			
Soccer Fields	30	30	0.0
Little League	20.6	20.6	0.0
TOTAL PRIVATELY-OPERATED FACILITIES	50.6	50.6	0.0
GRAND TOTAL	* 430.0	* 326.0	104.0

* rounded up

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates



TABLE 8.3
Existing and Recommended Supply of Multi-Use Parkland
Kerrville Comprehensive Plan
Kerrville, Texas

Classification	Existing Supply	Recommended Supply	Sufficiency or (Deficiency)
Pocket Park	0.3 acres	8 acres	(7.7 acres)
Neighborhood	43.6 acres	31 acres	13 acres
Community	70 acres	133 acres	(63) acres
Total	113.9 acres	172 acres	(58) acres

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Although the City parks cover 218 acres, it is important to recognize that 104 of the 218 acres are currently undeveloped and are generally not utilized, except for mountain biking and some hiking. Also there is a significant population residing outside the city limits that utilizes the City's parks and recreation facilities. This results in additional use and increased demand on the facilities in the area.

As growth continues to occur both in the City and its ETJ, it will be desirable for the City to actively work to assure the greater Kerrville area needs for parks and recreation facilities are met.

TABLE 8.4
Future Park Demand
Kerrville Comprehensive Plan
Kerrville, Texas

Classification	Year 2010 Demand	Year 2020 Demand
Pocket Park	9 acres	11 acres
Neighborhood	36 acres	42 acres
Community	156 acres	182 acres
Total	201 acres	235 acres

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Displayed in **Table 8.4, Future Park Demand**, is the amount of park acreage needed to meet the demand of a projected future population of 23,923 persons in Year 2010 and 27,966 persons in the Year 2020. To satisfy the projected demand, the City will need to acquire and/or develop an additional 87 acres by Year 2010 and 121 acres by the Year 2020.

Park Zones

Extraterritorial Park Zones

Proposed future park service areas were developed for the City's ETJ. Each "park zone" represents an area for which at least a community park will be needed as residential development continues to occur. Depending on the extent of development and its ultimate density, neighborhood parks will also be needed within each zone to adequately serve the parks and recreation needs of these residents.

Establishing park zones is useful in requiring the dedication of parkland or fee-in-lieu of development concurrent with subdivision approval in the City's ETJ. A joint agreement with Kerr County may also be established to develop and maintain parks in the City's ETJ, which may allow for the development of even larger parks with a variety of amenities and activities.



Parks and Recreation System Plan

The general plan for future development of Kerrville's parks and recreation system was developed through evaluation of existing conditions, planned improvements and projected future needs based upon anticipated development and increases in population. A future plan for the development of parks and recreation areas is shown in **Figure 8.1, Parks and Recreation System Plan**. The plan shows the generalized location of proposed neighborhood parks and identifies future bike lanes and trails.

To develop a system of neighborhood and community parks that will adequately serve the existing and projected future parks and recreation needs of the community, the City needs to acquire and develop seven parks within the northern and southern areas of the city. These parks will help to achieve full service area coverage of community parks and an even distribution of neighborhood parks.

The master plan will be a valuable resource that can be used on a continuous basis in guiding the City's parks and recreation development program. The goals, objectives, and recommended actions of the plan should be referenced in other planning studies and development proposal reports to ensure consideration of existing and planned public parks and recreation areas and open space. As new residential subdivisions are platted and developed, there should be allowances for sufficient land capable of being developed for public park and recreation uses.